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STAND UP IS SPEECH GENRE OF MODERN YOUTH CULTURE

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the speech specifics of the “stand-up” genre in youth culture and its role as a “social elevator”. The authors analyze the characteristics of the genre in terms of its speech characteristics and linguodidactic potential. The proximity of a standup to the verbal and non-verbal means used to the genre of everyday spontaneous speech, the humorous design, the practical limitlessness of the subject explains the popularity and attractiveness of the genre among young people. The popularity of the genre among young people, its use in club practice makes real appeal to its best examples in teaching the culture of speech. The style of the humorous show, the practice of an “open microphone”, when any visitor to the event can present their prepared speech to the audience and demonstrate the ability to improvise has turned stand-up into a broad movement, widely represented in a youth culture. Setting up special clubs, organizing solo events of the most popular representatives, arranging their tours allowed a stand-up to take a certain place in the structure of Russian show business having turned it into a rather serious entertainment industry. A characteristic feature of modern mass youth culture as a desire to be recognized, to receive as many “likes” as possible contribute to creating the author’s interactive musical, humorous shows as well as talk shows in the form of a stand-up in huge quantities and being available in Youtube and social networks.

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1. Introduction

The roots of globalization processes can be seen in a fairly distant past associated with dramatic changes in the economic, political, socio-cultural spheres of society of the 17th–18th centuries.

Mass production, technological revolution has turned a man into an ordinary supplement to the machine, which was noted in the work “Man-machine” and considered from a positive point of view. Mechanisms were thought of as an opportunity to free a person from physical labor, to give room for the intellectual development of everyone, to change the structure of free leisure time, and, in general, were presented as an indicator of progress and endless universal progressive movement of mankind.

A new level of technical support for human life has an explosive and systematic character at the turn of the 20th–21st centuries. It puts a person in a twofold position of a servant and a master. On the one hand, high technologies make life easier for modern people. On the other hand, they turn into primitive users, consumers of intellectual capabilities of “smart machines”.

Another manifestation of globalization apart from the technical one is the multiple increase of similar information. In the information society, a person is forced to address a huge array of information processed by someone stylistically, ideologically and ethically. Virtually unlimited amounts of data and advertising provided by computer technology and the technology of links and attachments literally drag a user into a myriad of information both useful and needless. Multilayering of such an information text requires special skills in working with it: figuring out subjective and objective data in the proposed materials, understanding the author’s position and the nature of this interpretation, ability to compare it with other sources, justification of the author’s own position, etc. Such skills are possible to develop by focused training, critical understanding of narrative materials and minimal life experience, which is often absent among young people. This leads to an uncritical perception of the proposed information, absence of a personal reasoned opinion, and logical thinking violation. On the contrary, it can result in a nihilistic perception of any information subject to an unconscious idea of its subjectivity. Unscrupulous public figures and representatives of political movements take advantage of it in order to create social instability. So, in the summer of the year 2019 it was reported that the administration of some regions of Siberia was not fighting fires, and on this basis, young people were called for protests. This unreliable network information provoked indignation among young people and led to dynamic actions.

Modern globalism is particularly manifested in the information and knowledge universalization, typification of rules and norms of behavior, manners and language of communication. It leads to a limited worldview sufficient for an “average” citizen, i.e., mediocrity in case of uncritical attitude towards these manifestations. In addition, the education standardization, standard programs in universities, the humanitarian disciplines reduction, the discrepancy between the intellect and age of Internet users and the capabilities of modern technologies result in creating a person of “mass culture” not capable of independent thinking, constructive creativity, not having an active positive life position. The underdevelopment of self-awareness, intellectual amorphism is expressed in the depreciation of people’s unique qualities.

2. Problem Statement

Extraordinarily fast development of the global Internet network, which has come to dominate in the communication paradigm, has led to the displacement of traditional classical ways of communication. A multimedia method of communication is rather popular with young people and is characterized by increasing contacts during mass communication and reducing direct active interaction. It generates many psychological problems and has devastating social and personal consequences. The situation magnitude is already being recognized at present and is expressed in the desire to invigorate the forms of communication which imply joint immediate experiences, exchange of views, i.e. realize the desire to feel like an event participator, interlocutor, and co-author. For example, professional actors and musicians' performances on improvised stages, specifically, subway, subway tunnels, parks are popular with bystanders, although everyone has the opportunity to listen to music individually using MP players. Such a live performance gives a large number of people a chance not only to listen or watch, but also to exchange experiences, to feel like a member of a small community with the same preferences, which is important in the stressful disconnecting rhythm of modern metropolis.

The popularity of intellectual games on television, in cafés, hobby clubs (book lovers, music lovers, fans of new directions in art) is stipulated by the desire to identify themselves in a small group of like-minded supporters. The principles of uniting people according to their interests are diverse: collecting, passion for sports, technology, the study of endangered monuments of architecture, and are aimed at acquiring the status of an extraordinary person.

Thus, the cultural transformations of modernity are characterized by a desire to overcome impersonality, show individuality, gain popularity, and, consequently, material embodiment of their originality recognition, which is especially important for young people.

Originally, the specific features of mass consciousness related to the standardization and leveling of addictions and tastes, manipulation of consciousness and dissemination of ideas were revealed and analyzed by the Spanish sociologist, philosopher, culturologist Jose Ortega y Gasset in his cult works "The Dehumanization of Art" and "The Revolt of the Masses". He stated that popular culture reduces a person to an extra position, likens him to many, and becomes dangerous due to the loss of a personal beginning as well as generation of primitive and aggressive thinking.

In our reality, this often manifests itself in the loss of socially significant content of many television programs, the predominance of everyday subjects in "selfies" (up to the preparation of suicide and its commitment), in the reduction of blogging topics, the predominance of negative material, unaesthetic nature of entertaining material.

3. Research Questions

The youth environment, in which stable moral guidelines have not been formed and a socially accepted level of culture is absent, gives negative patterns of behavior, speech clichés, and moral principles that are dangerous for the future. For example, passengers of public transport are no longer outraged by disrespect for older people, children, women, they are not surprised by the loose positions of

those who are sitting, loud and long conversations on mobile phones, and non-compliance with standard behavioral norms.

Young people are massively involved in technological forms of leisure, and therefore it is so important to support and encourage any positive start in the existing leisure creative field as well as positive, healthy grains in new undertakings of this type. A stand-up movement (which originated from the English “stand-up” or from Texas jargon – “faithful”, “proven”, “reliable”) can be considered useful along with intellectual (“Clever girls and clever boys”, “What? Where? When?” etc.) and educational (“Sea battle” on TV channel “Zvezda”) games and quests.

Features of stand-up being a speech genre in the space of youth culture, the reasons for its popularity among youth, the possibility of its use for the development of speech competence and communicative competencies are the main research questions of the article.

4. Purpose of the Study

This phenomenon appeared in leisure club culture at the beginning of the XXI century and was in demand in television versions on the following channels: STS, TNT, Russia 1 and others. The use of the “stand-up” concept is associated with the tendency of formation and widespread adoption of Englishism in the Russian language. This term generated in the 40s of the 20th century and has the same root words “stand-up fighter” – “faithful fighter”, “stand-up guy” – “reliable person”, “stand-up comic” – “reliable comedian” that works in a club and keeps a watch on tongue.

The stand-up genre has long been successfully implemented on television, so it is studied by theorists and practitioners of television journalism. Finding out the genre isolation of stand-up and the specifics of its use in journalistic work, some scholars suggest the implementation of three main classifications for a comprehensive study of various television subjects on regional television. Specifically, they are as follows: 1) according to the part of the report stand-up is presented: primary, middle and final; 2) according to the actions of a journalist in shot: static, in motion and in action; 3) by the role of a journalist in shot: an informant, experimenter, witness and the one putting his own “signature” (Zinoviev & Shutko, 2016).

Sometimes stand-up is not considered as an independent genre but rather as a technique used in different genres of television journalism, when the participation effect is important. A stand-up is a complete, independent action within the frame of the material presented. In stand-up, a reporter rather addresses the audience than talks with his characters. Standup is a message directed to viewers (Zhekova, 2018).

In latest historiography, not only the general problems of the genre, national features of the American, English, French and other stand-ups but also the style of individual Western comedian actors who have gained the greatest popularity such as Jim Jeffries, Bill Burr, George Carlin, Tim Mincin Lenny Bruce are often studied. Less attention is paid to domestic professional and non-professional performers.

In modern Russian (and not only Russian) culture a stand-up is predominantly presented as a direction of youth culture. Being a genre of stage speech that does not have clear boundaries, it can also be a performance (parody, comedy, musical) in front of an audience with a monologue of their own composition; and short jokes, stories from the author’s life, personal experience, opinions. Authors-

performers offer such definitions as “intellectual trash”, “authorial musical comedy show”, “interactive performance – story”, etc.

It is logical that the researchers noted the syncretic nature of the genre under consideration. All the components of speech mastery are important due to the fact that in sounding texts, the authorization effect of the subject is enhanced through the audio and visual components forming a visual representation of the presence of an author, their voice and appearance (the visual element is as important as an audio one, specifically, appearance, visual behavior are the parameters that also participate in creating an author of the stand-up and rap) claim to be perceived as autobiographical (Domansky, 2018).

Considering laughter as an indicator of communicative success of stand-up performances, the researchers note that prosodic emphasis is achieved through the use of the following parameters: melodic peak, maximum tonal range, strong change in nuclear tone, peak in volume, lower volume on the next element in the focus unit, change in speed speech and pause (Yavits, 2016).

This allows them to use various speech techniques to create a comic effect, apply non-verbal means and achieve success in a youth audience. The authors deliberately turn to everyday topics and apply not too complicated vocabulary as they appeal to the mass audience. Despite the fact that the speech is prepared in advance, it does not always have a classic three-part division. The authors improvise, apply the techniques of pop reprise, that is, they joke a lot, ironize, and apply the effect of surprise. They beat the words different in meaning but sounding equally, i.e., homophones, to create ambiguity. In addition, some speakers combine dissimilar even polar methods of material presentation, which makes the speech non-standard, memorable (Filindash, 2015a).

It should be noted that a large number of young people demonstrate a desire to show and feel involvement in the fashion movement of the stand-up as a significant cultural phenomenon. Researchers note that the task of forming new social connections and promoting new interests instead of lost ones is becoming more urgent in the context of Internet communications, when people’s isolation from real society is growing (Filindash, 2015b).

Establishing the degree to which the main features of stand-up meet the requirements for the choice of means for the speech competence development is the goal of this study.

5. Research Methods

Contrary to the existing opinion of some researchers and the participants themselves concerning the fact that the Russian stand-up appeared at the beginning of the 21st century, one should look for the roots of this phenomenon in Russian reality at the turn of the century, in the culture of the Silver Age. The high speech culture of cultural figures of this time, their rhetorical skills and the ability to achieve a comic effect in small reprisals were expressed in the heyday of the conversational genre. Meet-the-artist sessions popular until the end of the 1920s when answers to questions from the audience and discussion of works were a must, also contributed to the development of speech skills, popularization of most striking techniques, successful jokes, witticisms, and retorts (Suym, 2017).

The main methods used in this article are the descriptive method (observation, interpretation, generalization); visual analysis of non-verbal elements; component analysis of verbal elements; complex

analysis of lexical units; comparative analysis of video materials of stand-up monologues; chronological method.

6. Findings

Having studied the social composition of the stand-up movement participants, we can conclude that they fall into the following categories:

- professionals of the colloquial genre (journalists, writers, actors);
- semi-professionals, past participants of the TV show: Club of the cheerful and sharp-witted”;
- non-professionals.

People of different professions, levels of education and age are the participants of a stand-up movement.

The relevance of jokes and the urgency of problems (politics, religion, ethnocultural differences) have provided extraordinary popularity of stand-up performances in the social networks. On frequent occasions, an appeal to taboo topics in the Russian cultural tradition (sex, health, personal qualities of people, health, money/income, etc.) fuels interest in this genre in a youth audience.

7. Conclusion

Stand-up being one of the most popular genres of mass culture among young people shapes public opinion through the media when relevant facts, events, and phenomena are interpreted in the perspective given by stand-by authors. At the same time, it adapts the structure of value preferences, replaces the analysis of cognitive cause-and-effect relationships by sometimes primitive explanations, which generally vulgarizes consciousness, reduces it to an amorphous, infantile level.

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